

# PLAYGROUND SAFETY WEEK

APRIL 21-25, 2003

- 
- A stylized, high-contrast illustration in shades of yellow and white. It depicts a child on a swing set. The child is in the middle of a swing, with their arms outstretched. The swing set's frame and chains are visible. The background consists of abstract, flowing shapes that suggest movement and the environment of a playground.
- **S**upervise kids on playground
  - **A**ge-appropriate equipment
  - **F**alls: soften falls by providing appropriate materials
  - **E**quipment should be checked

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*Brought to you by:*

**Injury Research and Prevention Program/ Bureau of EMS**

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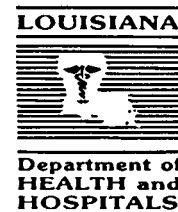
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M. J. "Mike" Foster, Jr.  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF LOUISIANA  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HOSPITALS



David W. Hood  
SECRETARY

March 2003

Dear Playground Safety Week Participants:

On behalf of the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals and the Office of Public Health, Bureau of EMS/Injury Research and Prevention Section, I am pleased to present the National Playground Safety Week campaign kit for 2003. I would like to recognize the contribution and support from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), Centers of Disease and Control (CDC), National Program for Playground Safety (NPPS), and the US Consumer Product Safety Commission.

The Playground Safety Week kit assists in the planning, and promotion of Playground Safety Week activities in individual communities across Louisiana. We would like to emphasize that having a S.A.F.E (Supervision, Age-appropriate, Falls soften surface, and checking Equipment) will minimize injuries on any playground across Louisiana. To further reduce playground injuries, we encourage all participants to utilize the enclosed signage for playground equipment areas designed for children ages 2-5 and 5-12.

I am excited and confident that you will make this year's Playground Safety Week observance a success!

Sincerely,

Miriam Nkemnji, MPH  
State Injury Prevention Coordinator



# State of Louisiana



*M. J. "Mike" Foster, Jr.*  
Governor

## Proclamation

WHEREAS, the safety and well-being of children is a priority of this state; and

WHEREAS, more than 200,000 children are injured on playgrounds in the United States each year equaling an average of one playground-related emergency room visit every two-and-one-half minutes; and

WHEREAS, the National Program for Playground Safety has been created at the University of Northern Iowa to help inform the nation about playground injuries and possible ways to reduce the number of injuries; and

WHEREAS, the National Program for Playground Safety has identified key areas that could help substantially reduce the number of playground injuries and keep our children SAFE - providing: proper Supervision, Age appropriate equipment, materials to soften Falls to the surface, and Equipment maintenance; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate to set aside a week each year for the direction and thought on how to keep our children safer on playgrounds; and

WHEREAS, spring is often a time that children head to the playground and a large percentage of playground injuries occur from April through June; and

WHEREAS, schools, parks, and other public facilities are preparing for summer season and playground participants; and

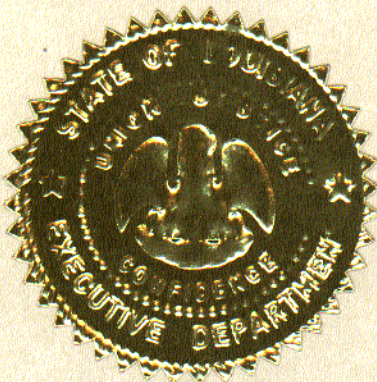
WHEREAS, all of us that care about children make the commitment that no Louisiana child shall play on an unsafe playground; and

WHEREAS, the National Program for Playground Safety has designated April 21-25, 2003, as National Playground Safety Week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, M.J. "Mike" Foster, Jr., Governor of the state of Louisiana, do hereby proclaim April 21-25, 2003, as

## PLAYGROUND SAFETY WEEK

in the state of Louisiana, and urge all citizens to join in this important observance.



Attest By  
The Governor

*Joseph S. Keithen*  
Secretary of State

*In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand officially and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Louisiana, at the Capitol, in the City of Baton Rouge, on this*  
the 31st day of January  
A.D., 2003

*M. J. Foster*  
Governor of Louisiana





# NEWS RELEASE

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April 21, 2003

Contact: Bob Johannessen; 225-342-1532

## **Foster Declares April 21-25 Playground Safety Week**

Baton Rouge --- Warm weather causes children to swarm onto the playgrounds at parks, schools and other public facilities. The Department of Health and Hospitals' Office of Public Health, along with other agencies, wants to make sure bumps, bruises and broken bones do not spoil a good time.

Gov. Mike Foster proclaimed Playground Safety Week April 21-25 to encourage prevention of playground injuries and raise awareness about the issue. DHH-OPH is working with Louisiana's Community Injury Prevention Program to inform citizens of the state about ways to reduce the number of playground injuries.

"Since more children will want to play outdoors during the spring and summer months, it is important that we use this week to inform parents, educators and everyone else about ways to prevent accidents and injuries," said Secretary David W. Hood.

The majority of playground injuries occur between April and June, so Safety Week is time-appropriate. Some ideas local park and recreation management groups can implement to prevent children getting hurt include providing proper supervision, age-appropriate equipment and materials to cushion falls. Playground supervisors also need to provide regular equipment maintenance.

OPH has compiled a "Playground Safety Kit" that will be sent to the nine OPH regions throughout the state. The injury prevention coordinator for each region will disseminate the information to local groups, including childcare centers and recreational groups to promote safe playtime.

For more information on playground injuries and how to prevent them, please visit the OPH Web site link <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/playgr.htm>.

[DHH Homepage](#)

# PLAYGROUND SAFETY

## The Problem

Each year in the United States, more than 200,000 children 14 years of age and younger are treated in emergency departments for playground-related injuries.

- About 15 children age 14 and under die from playground-related injuries each year. Almost half of these deaths result from strangulation, and about one-quarter are from falls to the playground surface.
- More than one-third of all playground-related injuries are severe—fractures, internal injuries, concussions, dislocations, and amputations.
- Almost 70% of injuries related to playground equipment occur on public playgrounds.
- Most injuries that occur on playgrounds are associated with climbing equipment, slides and swings.
- In schools, most injuries to students ages 5 to 14 occur on playgrounds.

In 1995, costs associated with playground-related injuries among children under 15 were estimated at \$1.3 billion.

## CDC's Accomplishments

### *National organization dedicated to playground safety*

Since 1995, CDC has funded the National Program for Playground Safety (NPPS), a nonprofit organization based at the University of Northern Iowa. Through training programs, educational materials, a hotline and web site, NPPS teaches parents, teachers, manufacturers, and others about supervision of children on playgrounds, age appropriateness of equipment, proper surfacing to prevent injuries from falls, and equipment maintenance. They have also developed and promoted a National Action Plan for the Prevention of Playground Injuries. In 2000, NPPS developed a safety survey; sponsored a Playground Safety School to promote playground safety and advocacy at the community level; and conducted a conference about age-appropriate playground design, which generated equipment recommendations for designers, manufacturers, and consumers.

### *Testing playground surfaces*

Shredded rubber performed best in a test of loose-fill playground surfacing materials, according to a study by NPPS and CDC, published in 2000. Sand, wood fibers and wood chips also performed adequately, with little difference among the three. Pea gravel provided the least resilience, making it a poor choice for playground surfacing. The researchers used a standard testing procedure (ASTM F1292) to evaluate the various playground surfaces. They found

some problems with the procedure—namely, that test results may be influenced by factors such as size of the test box, temperature, and compression of material. They suggested further investigation of the procedure.

### **Future Steps**

Playgrounds pose a significant injury risk for America's children. CDC must devote resources to developing and using safer playground equipment and surfaces and to educating the public about playground safety issues. Action steps include:

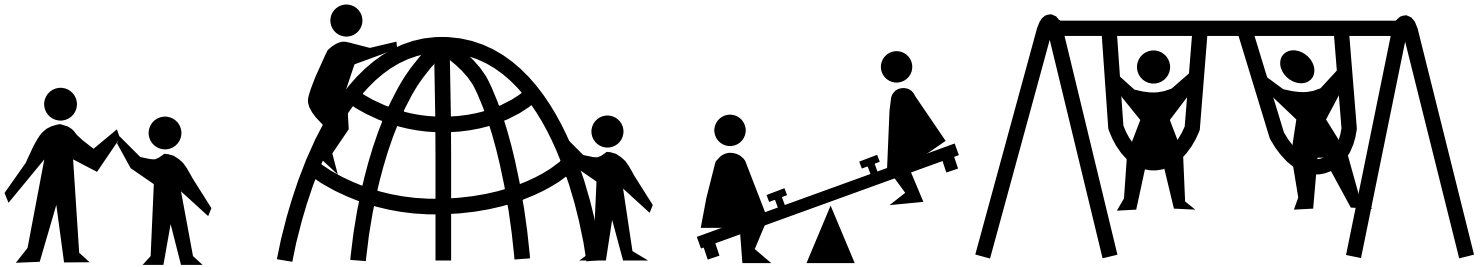
- Define priority research areas and recommend research methods.
- Assess the effectiveness of various cushioning surfaces for outdoor and indoor playgrounds.
- Pilot test models for implementing recommendations in the National Action Plan for the Prevention of Playground Injuries.
- Foster public and private partnerships to implement the national action plan.
- Train school administrators, teachers, nurses, child care specialists, and recreation professionals about playground safety.
- Evaluate playground safety programs and help communities adopt effective ones.
- Identify "best practices" for supervising children on playgrounds.

*Division of Unintentional Injury Prevention*



# America's Playgrounds

## SAFETY REPORT CARD



**STATE: Louisiana**

**GRADE: B-**

<b>S</b> UPERVISION	%	GRADE
Adults present	76	C
Easily viewed	99	A
Crawl spaces	6	A
Rules posted	4	F
Overall Grade for Supervision		B-
<b>A</b> GE-APPROPRIATE DESIGN		
Had separate areas	31	F
Signage for age group provided	2	F*
Provided change of directions to get on/off structure	100	A+
Had guardrails	100	A+
Prevented climbing outside the structure	83	B-
Supporting structure prevented climbing on it	87	B+
Overall Grade for Age-Appropriate Design		B-
<b>F</b> ALL SURFACING		
Appropriate surfacing provided	49	F
Six foot use zone had appropriate surface	38	F
Appropriate depth of loose fill provided	27	F
Concrete footings were covered	92	A-
Free of foreign objects	98	A
Overall Grade for Fall Surfacing		C-
<b>E</b> QUIPMENT MAINTENANCE		
Free of broken parts	83	B-
Free of missing parts	88	B+
Free of protruding bolts	87	B+
Free of noticeable gaps	97	A
Free of head entrapments	87	B+
Free of rust	98	A
Free of splinters	94	A
Free of cracks/holes	95	A
Overall Grade for Equipment Maintenance		A-

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT PROFILE		
Year of installation	U.S.	LA
Pre 1980	15%	23%
1981-1990	26%	25%
1991-1998	43%	47%
Not available	16%	5%
KINDS OF EQUIPMENT**		
Slides	87%	85%
Swings	71%	73%
Horizontal ladders	55%	38%
Sliding poles	41%	19%
Chinning bars	30%	15%
Seesaws	22%	26%
Merry-go-rounds	18%	15%
Geodesic domes	18%	10%
**The numbers in these columns reflect to what percentage these equipment pieces were found. For example, 87% of all playgrounds surveyed had slides and 71% of all playgrounds surveyed had swings.		
<b>A = 90-100    B = 80-89    C = 70-79    D = 60-69    F = 59&gt;</b>		

### COMMENTS:

Louisiana had just above average in playground safety. There are several areas, however, that if improved could make the playgrounds much safer for the children enjoying them. In terms of supervision, Louisiana has done an excellent job of providing equipment that allows adults to easily view the children at play. Improvements in supervision can be made simply by having more adults present while children are playing and also by posting rules referring to appropriate behavior on the playground. In terms of age-appropriate design, work needs to be done on providing separate play areas for children 2-5 and 5-12 years of age. Also, adding signage to indicate such areas will create a safer environment. A fine job is being done preventing children from climbing on supporting structures, providing guardrails, and offering an area for children to change direction and get off the structure they have decided not to play on. With surfacing playgrounds, a good job has been done covering concrete footings and keeping debris out of the surfacing. However, improvements can be made in providing appropriate surfacing throughout the six foot use zone and the appropriate depth. Louisiana's best area is in equipment maintenance.



\* In response to this grade, the NPPS has partnered with 3M Nexcare First Aid Products to install signs at select playgrounds nationwide.

# America's Playgrounds

## SAFETY REPORT CARD



### DOES YOUR PLAYGROUND MAKE THE GRADE?

Evaluate the risk factors in your playground using the following format.

A complete explanation of the criteria is below.

	YES	NO
<b>SUPERVISION</b>		
1. Adults present when children are on equipment		
2. Children can be easily viewed when on equipment		
3. Children can be viewed in crawl spaces		
4. Rules posted regarding expected behavior		
<b>AGE-APPROPRIATE DESIGN</b>		
1. Playgrounds have separate areas for ages 2-5 and 5-12		
2. Signage indicating age group for equipment provided		
3. Platforms allow change of direction to get on/off structure		
4. Platforms have appropriate guardrails		
5. Equipment design prevents climbing outside the structure		
6. Supporting structure prevents climbing on it		
<b>FALL SURFACING</b>		
1. Appropriate surfacing provided		
2. Six foot use zone has appropriate surface		
3. Appropriate depth of loose fill provided		
4. Concrete footings are covered		
5. Surface is free of foreign objects		
<b>EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE</b>		
1. Equipment is free of broken parts		
2. Equipment is free of missing parts		
3. Equipment is free of protruding bolts		
4. Equipment is free of noticeable gaps		
5. Equipment is free of head entrapments		
6. Equipment is free of rust		
7. Equipment is free of splinters		
8. Equipment is free of cracks/holes		

#### Scoring System

For every 'Yes' your playground receives one point. Total up the number of points for each section.

Supervision \_\_\_\_\_

Age Appropriate \_\_\_\_\_

Fall Surfacing \_\_\_\_\_

Equipment Main. \_\_\_\_\_

**Total** \_\_\_\_\_

**23-20 = A** Congratulations on having a SAFE playground. Make sure you maintain this level of excellence.

**19-16 = B** Your playground is on its way to providing a safe environment for children. Work on the areas checked 'No'.

**15-12 = C** Your Playground has potential for being hazardous for children. Take corrective measures.

**11-8 = D** Children are at risk on this playground. Start today to make improvements!

**7 and below** do not allow children on the playground.

Call 1-800-554-PLAY



## -----EXPLANATION OF RISK FACTOR CRITERIA-----

### SUPERVISION

1. Since equipment can't supervise children, it is important that adult supervision is present when children are on the playground. It is estimated that approximately 40% of playground injuries have lack of supervision cited as a contributing factor.
2. Proper supervision means children need to be seen. There should be no blind spots where children can hide out of the sight of the supervisor.
3. Many crawl spaces, tunnels and boxed areas have plexiglass or some type of transparent material present so the supervisor can see the child inside the space. When blind tunnels are present, children cannot be properly supervised.
4. Rules help reinforce expected behavior. The posting of playground rules is recommended. For children ages 2 to 5, no more than three rules should be posted. Children over the age of five will remember five rules. These rules should be general in nature, such as, "Respect each other and take turns."

*Brought to you by:*

#### **Bureau of EMS/Injury Research and Prevention Program**

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## **AGE-APPROPRIATE DESIGN**

1. It is recommended that playgrounds have separate areas with appropriately-sized equipment and materials to serve ages 2 to 5 and ages 5 to 12. Further, the intended user group should be obvious from the design and scale of equipment. In playgrounds designed to serve children of all ages, the layout of pathways and the landscaping of the playground should show the distinct areas for the different age groups. The areas should be separated at least by a buffer zone, which could be an area with shrubs or benches.
2. Signs posted in the playground area can be used to give some guidance to adults as to the age appropriateness of equipment.
3. Platforms over six feet in height should provide an intermediate standing surface where a decision can be made to halt the ascent and to pursue an alternative means of descent.
4. Either guardrails or protective barriers may be used to prevent inadvertent or unintentional falls off elevated platforms. However, to provide greater protection, protective barriers should be designed to prevent intentional attempts by children seeking to defeat the barrier either by climbing over or through the barrier.
5. Children use equipment in creative ways which are not necessarily what the manufacturer intended when designing the piece. Certain equipment pieces, like high tube slides, can put the child at risk if they can easily climb on the outside of the piece. This is a judgment on your part as to whether the piece was designed to minimize risk to the child from injury from a fall.
6. One reason that swings were redesigned (by removing the horizontal bar on the supporting a-frame structures) was that children used that bar to climb up to the top of the structure. Sometimes, support structures such as long poles, bars, etc. become the play activity. The problem is that many times these structures have no safe surfacing underneath and children fall from dangerous heights to hard surfaces.



## **FALL SURFACING**

1. Appropriate surfaces are either loose fill (sand, pea gravel, shredded tires, wood chips, wood mulch) or unitary surfaces (rubber tiles, rubber mats and poured in place rubber). Inappropriate surface materials are asphalt, concrete, dirt and grass. Falls from one foot onto concrete can cause a concussion. Falls from eight feet onto dirt is the same as a child hitting a brick wall traveling 30 mph.
2. Appropriate surfacing should be located directly underneath equipment and extend six feet in all directions, with the exception of slides and swings which have a longer use zone. Swings have a use zone of twice the height from the ground to the crossbar, front and back. The use zone for slides is the height of the slide plus four feet.
3. Proper loose fill surfacing must be at the appropriate depth to cushion falls. An inch of sand upon hard packed dirt will not provide any protection. We recommend 12 inches of loose fill material under and around playground equipment.
4. You should not be able to see concrete footings around any of the equipment. Deaths or permanent disabilities have occurred from children falling off equipment and striking their heads on exposed footings.
5. Glass, pop tops, needles, trash, etc. can also cause injury if present on the playground surfaces.



## EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE

1. Broken equipment pieces are accidents waiting to happen. If a piece of equipment is broken, measures need to be taken to repair it, and children should be kept off the equipment until it is safe.
2. Missing parts also create a playground hazard. A rung missing from a ladder which is the major access point onto a piece of equipment poses an unnecessary injury hazard for the child.
3. Protruding bolts or fixtures can cause problems with children running into equipment or catching clothing, posing a potential safety hazard.
4. Strangulation is the leading cause of playground fatalities. Some of these deaths occur when drawstrings on sweatshirts, coats and other clothing get caught in gaps in the equipment. The area on top of slides is one potential trouble spot.
5. Entrapment places include between guardrails and underneath merry-go-rounds. Head entrapment occurs when the body fits through a space but the child's head cannot pass through the same space. This occurs because generally, young children's heads are larger than their bodies. If the space between two parts (usually guardrails) is more than three and a half inches, it must be greater than nine inches to avoid potential entrapment.
6. Exposed metal will rust. This weakens the equipment part and will eventually create a serious playground hazard.
7. Wood structures must be treated regularly to avoid weather-related problems such as splinters. Splintering can cause serious injuries to children.
8. Plastic equipment may crack or develop holes due to temperature extremes and/or vandalism. This is a playground hazard.



## Playground Safety For Kids!

# Safety Tips

Hi Kids...  
Here are some safety  
tips to follow while you are  
on the playground!



These will help keep  
you safe!



- 🔴 **Play responsibly.**
- 🔴 **Make sure to take off your bicycle helmet when playing on the playground equipment.**
- 🔴 **Adults should always be present when children play.**
- 🔴 **There should be soft surfacing underneath the playground equipment.**
- 🔴 **Pick up the trash.**
- 🔴 **Tell an adult if playground equipment is broken, and do not play on it until it is fixed.**
- 🔴 **Safety on Swings: Sit down while you swing. Slow down before you get off of a swing. Do not walk near someone who is swinging. You could get hit if you walk too closely.**
- 🔴 **Safety on Climbers: Use both hands when you climb. Only climb on dry equipment. You could fall if it is wet.**
- 🔴 **Safety on Slides: Never climb up the front of the slide. Someone may slide down and hit you. It is safest to slide down with your feet first. Only one person should slide down at a time.**

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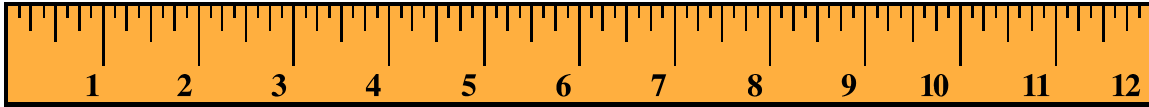
<http://www.kidchecker.org>

**----PLAYGROUND SAFETY WEEK----**  
**April 21-25, 2003**

# **ACTIVITIES**

## Does Your Playground Measure Up?

During Playground Safety Week this year (April 22-26), the National Program for Playground Safety is providing a Kid Checker Checklist (see the website) for children. We are asking children to check the safety of their playgrounds. We believe that the playground is also an important outdoor classroom. To demonstrate this we offer the following fun examples to show how checking for safety can also teach math concepts.



### Safety Measures:

**1. HEAD ENTRAPMENTS:** We know that one of the most serious problems occur when openings on playground equipment are greater than  $3\frac{1}{2}$ " and less than 9 inches. This size of opening can allow the head to be entrapped and lead to strangulation and death.

**How to Measure:** To avoid head entrapments, spaces need to be less than  $3\frac{1}{2}$ " or greater than nine inches. You can measure openings with a ruler or a dollar bill.



**Dollar bill method:** You will need 3-dollar bills for this. Each dollar bill is 6" in length. Fold one-dollar bill in half. Fold one-dollar bill so that it is  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches long. Now you are ready to begin. Take the dollar bill that is  $3\frac{1}{2}$ " in length. Try to fit it through small spaces on the playground equipment. If it does not go through, you do not have an entrapment. If it goes through then take the 6" bill and place it next to the  $3\frac{1}{2}$ " bill. That makes 9 inches. See if that 9" length will fit through the space you measured with the  $3\frac{1}{2}$ " bill. If the 9" dollar bills fit through the opening, the space is not an entrapment problem. If the 9" dollar bills do not fit through the opening, the space is an entrapment problem. (Try spaces like guard rails).

**2. FALLS TO THE SURFACE:** Falls to the surface are the leading cause of injury to children on playgrounds. The concern is that the higher the equipment children fall from, the harder they fall and the more severe the injury is. NPPS recommends that the equipment for preschoolers (ages 2 – 5) not be higher than 6 feet and that equipment for school age children not be any higher than 8 feet.

**How to Measure:** To avoid severe injuries by falls to the surface, you can measure the height of the equipment with a tape ruler or by using a body measurement called the overhead reach.



**Overhead reach method:** Measure the height of a child plus the overhead reach of the hands. Use that height to measure the height of the equipment.



**3. DEPTH OF SURFACING:** Another way that children are severely injured is by falling to the surface that is not appropriate or not deep enough. Surfacing that should never be found under and around playground equipment includes asphalt, cement, dirt and grass. They do not have the ability to cushion a fall adequately. Loose-fill surfacing materials that are acceptable, if they are deep enough include sand, pea gravel, wood products and shredded rubber products. Other poured in place products are also acceptable.

**How to Measure:** To prevent children from being injured severely from a fall, NPPS recommends that you have 12" of loose-fill surfacing. You can use a ruler to measure the depth of loose-fill surfacing or a sipping straw.



**Straw method:** You can measure the depth of the surfacing by using a straw. Straws from fast food restaurants come in 6", 7", or 8" lengths. Measure the length of the straw before you use it. Insert the straw in the ground as far as it will go to measure the depth of material.

**4. USE ZONE PLACEMENT:** We also know that surfacing needs to be in a use zone – the place where children are likely to fall. If the surfacing is not in the use zone, children are likely to be hurt when they hit the ground. For stationary equipment (equipment that does not move) this use zone extends six feet in all directions. For swings the use zone is twice the height of the swing beam in front and back.

**How to Measure:** Use a tape measure or body measurement called span reach or use your stride to measure the six feet surfacing around equipment. What is the distance? \_\_\_\_\_.



**Stride Method:** Measure your stride. Use that length of stride to measure the distance the use zone: the distance on the ground that extends from the equipment. Distance: \_\_\_\_\_ **Span Reach:** Measure the reach of the child from finger tip to finger tip. Use that distance to measure the distance out from the equipment on the surface. Distance: \_\_\_\_\_ Again, the distance should be 6 feet.

In #3 you measured the depth of the surfacing materials. Now, measure the depth of the surfacing in 1 foot increments away from the equipment:

1 foot \_\_\_\_\_ 2 feet \_\_\_\_\_ 3 feet \_\_\_\_\_ 4 feet \_\_\_\_\_ 5 feet: \_\_\_\_\_ 6 feet: \_\_\_\_\_  
How deep is the surfacing in each of those places? We recommend 12" of loose-fill surfacing

**5. OPEN S-HOOKS:** We know that children's clothing and strings on jackets can get caught in openings of s-hooks on swings where swing seats are connected to chains. That can cause strangulation. The openings should be closed.

**How to Measure:** To avoid the openings from being too big, space should not be greater than 0.04 inches. In order to check that space, use ruler (marked in hundredths), a 0.04 inch feeler gauge (borrow one from your Dad-like those used for spark plugs), a credit card or a dime.



**Feeler gauge method:** Use a 0.04 “ feeler gauge to measure the opening.

**Credit card, plastic card or dime method:** Use a credit card or a dime to measure openings in s-hooks. The spaces for those openings should not allow a credit card or dime to pass through.

NPPS has created more examples that help children apply the math concepts of counting, angles, fractions/ratios and percents. [Click here for an extended version.](#)

Playground Safety For Kids!

# Write A Letter

## WRITE TO NPPS

We are interested in hearing about your experience on the playground. Your real life experience will help figure out other ways to make the playground safe.



1. What do you like to do on the playground?
2. What is the best memory you have about playground?
3. What dangerous things do you find on the playground?
4. How can you be safe on the playground?
5. What playground safety issues do you want to hear more about?
6. Write us a poem or song about playgrounds.

**To write a letter to us and send it to this address:**

The National Program for Playground Safety  
School for Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services  
WRC 205  
University of Northern Iowa  
Cedar Falls, Iowa 50614-0618



Playground Safety For Kids!

# Ways to Help!



- 🔴 **Report any problems immediately to an adult.**

Report the problem to one of the adults below:

Teacher, PTA President, Principal, Park Department Director, Child Care Director, or your parent

- 🔴 **Get your youth group involved with playground safety.**

Work together to keep local playgrounds safe.

Your group can volunteer by:

- 1) picking up the trash
- 2) checking for broken parts
- 3) raking the surface material to keep it even.

- 🔴 **Become a [KidChecker!](http://www.kidchecker.org)**

- 🔴 **Celebrate National Playground Safety Week! - April 22-26, 2002**

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<http://www.kidchecker.org>



## **KIDD BROTHERS' BIOGRAPHY**

When Andrew and John Kidd step onto a playground they are not there just to play, they are there to help make the playground SAFE! Armed with a ruler and basketball in their hands, they mean business. These are the tools they use to measure if the playground spaces are safe.

Andrew and John Kidd became involved with playground safety after Andrew's accident. In 1994, 5-year-old Andrew fell from atop a 9-foot climber. His injuries included 200 bruises, a displaced jaw and lip, and 2 broken teeth. Andrew had to have 15 surgeries. After the successful surgeries, Andrew has become a KID CHECKER!

Following Andrew's accident, the *Indianapolis Star* newspaper wrote an article about Andrew. NPPS read the story and then contacted him. Since then, he has been a part of the NPPS team.

In 2000, Andrew and John had another experience at a playground. At the time, Andrew was 10 years old and John was 8 years old. They went to a playground near their home. Before they played, they did a check to make sure it was safe. They decided that the playground was safe. However, John lost his grip on a zip line track ride and fell 7 feet. He lost his breath for a couple of seconds. Fortunately, John fell onto a surface that had 15 inches of mulch. Because of the safe surface, John was able to get back up and continue playing.

Today, Andrew and John are working to help prevent playground injuries. They travel across the country talking to communities, children, parents and news media about playground safety.

For such dedication to playground safety, McDonald's and Walt Disney chose Andrew as one of the Millennium Dreamers. Only 2000 young people, ages 8 – 15, were chosen. Over 11,000 children were nominated. Children had to submit essays on what they're doing to make a difference in their communities.

One of the trips highlights was meeting Christopher Reeve. The actor told Andrew that, "There are no super heroes. Heroes are just ordinary people who, because of their circumstances, do extraordinary things."

Because of Andrew's injuries, John and Andrew have done extraordinary things for playground safety education. They have handed out 150 safety brochures at a park and to 25 legislators. Andrew and John have spoken with Indiana's Governor. The Kidd brothers have taught playground safety classes to both Cub Scouts and 5<sup>th</sup> graders. They have done several live TV interviews, including NBC's *Later Today* and *Oprah*. Andrew's goal is to "Make America's Playground Safe!" John's goal is "Let's go out there and play safe!"



Help us determine if your playground is safe!

Check YES or NO in each box to determine whether or not your playground has problems.



	<b>S</b> upervision	<b>A</b> ge Appropriate	<b>F</b> all Surfacing	<b>E</b> quipment Maintenance
<b>RED</b>  Most Serious May Cause Death	<i>Are adults at the playground?</i>  <div>YES</div> <div>NO</div>  Adults should always be at the playground if children are there.	<i>Are the play areas separated?</i>  <div>YES</div> <div>NO</div>  If play areas are provided for preschoolers (ages 2-5), there should be a separate play area for school age children (ages 5-12).	<i>Does the surface have appropriate materials?</i>  <div>YES</div> <div>NO</div>  Appropriate materials are sand, pea gravel, wood products, shredded rubber, rubber mats or poured-in-place rubber.	<i>Are all the spaces less than 3 1/2 inches or greater than 9 inches?</i>  <div>YES</div> <div>NO</div>  Spaces that are between 3 1/2 inches and 9 inches can cause strangulation.
<b>WHITE</b>  Very Serious May Cause Severe Injuries	<i>Can adults see children in crawl spaces?</i>  <div>YES</div> <div>NO</div>  Crawl spaces are places where children can hide.	<i>Is the equipment at the correct height?</i>  <div>YES</div> <div>NO</div>  Equipment should be below 8 feet for children ages 5-12.	<i>Are the materials 12 inches deep?</i>  <div>YES</div> <div>NO</div>  Sand, pea gravel, wood products, or shredded rubber should be 12 inches deep.	<i>Is the equipment in good condition?</i>  <div>YES</div> <div>NO</div>  The equipment should not have any broken parts.
<b>BLUE</b>  Serious May Cause Minor Injury	<i>Are there rules posted?</i>  <div>YES</div> <div>NO</div>  Rules should be posted at the playground to tell children what to do and what not to do.	<i>Are signs posted about supervision and separation of equipment?</i>  <div>YES</div> <div>NO</div>  There should be signs about adult supervision and separation of play areas (2-5 and 5-12).	<i>Is the playground environment clean?</i>  <div>YES</div> <div>NO</div>  The playground area should not have trash on the ground.	<i>Is the equipment surface smooth?</i>  <div>YES</div> <div>NO</div>  The playground should have no rust or splinters on the equipment.

Once you have completed each box, please turn the page over to find out what to do about problems.

# Thanks for being a Kid Checker

The boxes that are checked NO are problem areas that need immediate attention. You should report the problems to one or more of the following:

- Parent
- Teacher
- PTA President
- Principal
- Child Care Director
- Park Department Director

You can continue to help make your playground **SAFE**:

- *Check the playground for safe conditions*
- *Pick up the trash*
- *Help make adults aware of equipment that needs fixing*
- *Play on the playground once it is safe*
- *Teach other children about the importance of playground safety*

NAME: _____	AGE: _____
ADDRESS: _____	
CITY: _____	
STATE: _____	ZIP: _____
THE PLAYGROUND THAT YOU CHECKED WAS AT A:	
SCHOOL _____	PARK _____ CHILD CARE _____

To receive your **Kid-Checker Certificate** send this information to:  
The National program for Playground Safety  
University of Northern Iowa  
WRC 205  
Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0618

## America's Playgrounds – Make Them Safe!



# **PLAYGROUND SAFETY RESOURCES**

# PLAYGROUND SAFETY RESOURCES

## NATIONAL

### **American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)**

<http://www.aap.org/family/playgrd.htm>

### **Boundless Playgrounds**

<http://www.boundlessplaygrounds.org/> (offer assistance with building universally accessible playgrounds for children of all abilities)

### **CDC-National Center for Injury Prevention and Control**

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/factsheets/playgr.htm>

### **KaBOOM**

<http://www.kaboom.org/>

[http://www.kaboom.org/pdf/KB!\\_GSK.pdf](http://www.kaboom.org/pdf/KB!_GSK.pdf) (starter kit for planning a playground)

### **National Program for Playground Safety**

<http://www.uni.edu/playground/>

<http://www.kidchecker.org>

### **US Consumer Product Safety Commission**

<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/325.pdf>

1-800-638-2772

## LOCAL

### **DHH/Office of Public Health**

Bureau of EMS/Injury Research and Prevention Section

MCH Community Injury Prevention Program

<http://www.oph.dhh.state.la.us/injuryprevention/communityinjuryprevention/index.html>

## U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

PLAYGROUND SAFETY PUBLICATIONS			
Document Number	Name of Publication	Document Format	
321	<b>Little Big Kids</b> For parents to read with their kids (ages 3-5) on the topic of playground safety.		<a href="#">PDF</a>
323	<b>Home Playground Safety Tips</b> Reports that each year an estimated 51,000 children are treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms for home playground-related injuries -- mostly resulting from falls. Provides tips on protective surfacing, fall zones, reducing hazards, and maintenance.		<a href="#">PDF</a> <a href="#">PDF-Spanish</a>
325	<b>Handbook for Public Playground Safety</b> Presents playground equipment safety information in the form of guidelines. Intended for use by parks and recreation personnel, school officials, equipment purchasers, installers, and others interested in playground safety (46 pages).		<a href="#">PDF</a>
327	<b>Public Playground Safety Checklist</b> Use this checklist to inspect local school and community playgrounds and notify school or park officials about any hazards found.	<a href="#">HTML</a>	
328	<b>Soft Contained Play Equipment Safety Checklist</b> CPSC staff developed checks to help parents and children use Soft Contained Play Equipment safely.	<a href="#">HTML</a>	
5036	<b>Prevent Burns on Hot Metal Playground Equipment</b> Safety Alert	<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">PDF</a>
5065	<b>Strangulation Hazard with Playground Cargo Nets</b> Safety Alert	<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">PDF</a>

5094	<b>Strings Can Strangle Children on Playground Equipment</b> Safety Alert	<a href="#">HTML</a>	
5119	<b>Never Put Children's Climbing Gyms On Hard Surfaces, Indoors Or Outdoors</b> Safety Alert	<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">PDF</a>
5121	<b>Wear Bike Helmets On Bicycles - Not On Playgrounds</b> Safety alert on a hidden hazard	<a href="#">HTML</a>	<a href="#">PDF</a>
6005	<b>CPSC Staff Recommendations for Identifying and Controlling Lead Paint on Public Playground Equipment</b> Executive Summary	<a href="#">HTML</a>	
6006	<b>Recommendations for Identifying and Controlling Lead Paint on Public Playground Equipment</b>	<a href="#">HTML</a>	
6007	<b>Questions and Answers for Lead Paint on Public Playground Equipment Prepared by CPSC Staff</b>	<a href="#">HTML</a>	

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[PDF](#) means that the document is in portable document format. If you have not done so already, viewing these publications requires [Adobe AcrobatTM software](#). If your browser (such as Netscape) is compatible with Adobe Acrobat, you can set it up so that documents are viewed automatically. Otherwise, you can download the document to your computer and use Adobe Acrobat to view it.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission protects the public from unreasonable risks of injury or death from 15,000 types of consumer products under the agency's jurisdiction. To report a dangerous product or a product-related injury, call CPSC's hotline at (800) 638-2772 or CPSC's teletypewriter at (800) 638-8270, or visit CPSC's web site at [www.cpsc.gov/talk.html](http://www.cpsc.gov/talk.html). Consumers can obtain this release and recall information at CPSC's web site at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov).

# ABOUT THE MCH COMMUNITY INJURY PREVENTION PROGRAM



## MCH Community Injury Prevention Program

We envision that Louisiana's children will grow in a healthy, nurturing, and safe environment if the needs of children become our priority. With this vision, the Office of Public Health has initiated an Injury Prevention Program to serve all nine regions in the state. The program is under the auspices of the Office of Public Health and functions within the guidelines of the Emergency Medical Services/Injury Prevention Program and the Maternal and Child Health Program. In each region, the program is in partnership with the following agencies: North and South Louisiana Area Health Education Center (AHEC), Christus St. Francis Cabrini Hospital, Maternal and Child Health Coalition, and Options For Independence.

The goal of the program is to reduce the leading causes of unintentional injury deaths in Louisiana from birth to 21 years of age, by creating a coordinated community-based injury prevention program.

## Injury Prevention Coordinators

The state and regional coordinators educate the public about unintentional injuries, identify risk groups for specific injuries, and work within the communities to create initiatives targeted at preventing injuries. They coordinate resources and activities that address injuries and or deaths associated with **Choking & Suffocation; Drowning; Falls; Firearms; Fire & Burns; Poisoning; Motor Vehicles; Sudden Infant Deaths.** They can supply fact sheets, prevention tips, teaching materials, training events, videos, and other injury prevention information.

For more information about the Maternal and Child Health Community Injury Prevention Program, please contact:

**Miriam Nkemnji, MPH**  
**MCH Community Injury Prevention Program**  
**325 Loyola Avenue, Suite 305**  
**New Orleans, LA 70112**  
**504.568.8494 (W)**  
**504.568.7312 (F)**



**Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals  
Office of Public Health  
Bureau of EMS/Injury Research and Prevention Section  
MCH Community Injury Prevention Program**

**MCH Community Injury Prevention Coordinators**

<b>State Injury Prevention Coordinator</b> <b>Miriam Nkemnji</b> 325 Loyola Avenue, Suite 305 New Orleans, LA 70112 Phone: 504.568.8494 Fax: 504.568.7312 E-mail: <a href="mailto:mnkemnji@dhh.state.la.us">mnkemnji@dhh.state.la.us</a>	<b>Wanda Rose: REGION 1 (New Orleans)</b> 1010 Common Street, Suite 700 New Orleans, LA 70112 Phone: 504.599.0162 Fax: 504.599.0200 E-mail: <a href="mailto:wrose@dhh.state.la.us">wrose@dhh.state.la.us</a>
<b>Adena Houghton: REGION 2 (Baton Rouge)</b> 1772 Wooddale Drive Baton Rouge, LA 70806 Phone: 225.925.3840 Fax: 225.925.1771 E-mail: <a href="mailto:ahoughto@dhh.state.la.us">ahoughto@dhh.state.la.us</a>	<b>Linda Savoie: REGION 3 (Thibodaux)</b> 1434 Tiger Drive Thibodaux, LA 70301 Phone: 985.447.0916 ext.348 Fax: 985.447.0920 E-mail: <a href="mailto:lsavoie@dhh.state.la.us">lsavoie@dhh.state.la.us</a>
<b>Melissa D'Aunoy: REGION 4 (Lafayette)</b> 825 Kaliste Saloom Road Brandywine III, Suite 100 Lafayette, LA 70508 Phone: 337.262.5311 ext. 1132 Fax: 337.262.5237 E-mail: <a href="mailto:mwdaunoy@dhh.state.la.us">mwdaunoy@dhh.state.la.us</a>	<b>Erika Murray: REGION 5 (Lake Charles)</b> 4240 Sen. J. Bennett Johnston Avenue Lake Charles, LA 70615 Phone: 337.491.2275 Fax: 337.491.2041 E-mail: <a href="mailto:ebmurray@dhh.state.la.us">ebmurray@dhh.state.la.us</a>
<b>Katherine Fontenette REGION 6 (Alexandria)</b> CHRISTUS St. Francis Cabrini 3330 Masonic Drive Alexandria, LA 71301 Phone: 318.561.4162 Fax: 318.448.4904 E-mail: <a href="mailto:kfontenette@sfc.christushealth.org">kfontenette@sfc.christushealth.org</a>	<b>Lenora Holm: REGION 7 (Shreveport)</b> 1035 Creswell Avenue, Suite 356 Shreveport, LA 71101 Phone: 318.676.5286 Fax: 318.676.7783 E-mail: <a href="mailto:lholt@dhh.state.la.us">lholt@dhh.state.la.us</a>
<b>Wilma Davenport: REGION 8 (Monroe)</b> 1650 Desiard Street P.O. Box 4460 Monroe, LA 71211-4460 Phone: 318.361.7237 Fax: 318.362.3163 E-mail: <a href="mailto:wilma@nlahec.org">wilma@nlahec.org</a>	<b>Lola LeBlanc: REGION 9 (Mandeville)</b> 21454 Koop Drive, Suite 1-C Mandeville, LA 70471 Phone: 985.871.1300 Fax: 985.871.1334 E-mail: <a href="mailto:lleblanc@dhh.state.la.us">lleblanc@dhh.state.la.us</a>

# **Consumer Product Safety Commission**

## **Public Playground Safety Checklist**

**CPSC Document #327**

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### **Is your public playground a safe place to play?**

Each year, more than 200,000 children go to U.S. hospital emergency rooms with injuries associated with playground equipment. Most injuries occur when a child falls from the equipment onto the ground.

Use this simple checklist to help make sure your local community or school playground is a safe place to play.

#### **Public Playground Safety Checklist**

- 1. Make sure surfaces around playground equipment have at least 12 inches of wood chips, mulch, sand, or pea gravel, or are mats made of safety-tested rubber or rubber-like materials.**
- 2. Check that protective surfacing extends at least 6 feet in all directions from play equipment. For swings, be sure surfacing extends, in back and front, twice the height of the suspending bar.**
- 3. Make sure play structures more than 30 inches high are spaced at least 9 feet apart.**
- 4. Check for dangerous hardware, like open "S" hooks or protruding bolt ends.**
- 5. Make sure spaces that could trap children, such as openings in guardrails or between ladder rungs, measure less than 3.5 inches or more than 9 inches.**
- 6. Check for sharp points or edges in equipment.**
- 7. Look out for tripping hazards, like exposed concrete footings, tree stumps, and rocks.**
- 8. Make sure elevated surfaces, like platforms and ramps, have guardrails to prevent falls.**
- 9. Check playgrounds regularly to see that equipment and surfacing are in good condition.**
- 10. Carefully supervise children on playgrounds to make sure they're safe.**

## 2003 Louisiana Playground Safety Resource Packet Evaluation

We would like to know what your group chose to do for Playground Safety Week and how your events affected your group and your community. Your comments and suggest are very important to us and they assist us in planning the information and materials to provide in future Playground planning kits. We love to receive photographs, new clips, and samples of any items you used during your Playground Safety Week activities. Please clearly label the items. Any items submitted to us are NON-RETURNABLE. Thank you.

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**This packet helped me/my organization carry out activities for Playground Safety Week.**

☐ Yes

☐ No

**I will use this resource throughout the year:**

☐ Yes

☐ No

**What would you like to see in the packet that was not there?**

**Please briefly describe your Playground Safety activities, including co-sponsors, community participants, and media coverage.**

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**Suggestions for next year:**

Contact person \_\_\_\_\_  
Organization (*please provide exact name*) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return to:**

**Miriam Nkemnji  
State Injury Prevention Coordinator  
325 Loyola Avenue, Suite 305  
New Orleans, LA 70130  
Fax (504) 568-7312**

**This area designed  
for ages 2-5.**



**Please supervise  
your children on  
the playground.**

Sign Provided By: **3M** Nexcare<sup>™</sup>  
FIRST AID



**For more information, call 1-800-554-PLAY**

**This area designed  
for ages 5-12.**



**Please supervise  
your children on  
the playground.**

Sign Provided By: **3M** Nexcare<sup>™</sup>  
FIRST AID



**For more information, call 1-800-554-PLAY**